



# Washington State Department of **CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES**

Early Learning Advisory Council (ELAC) Meeting  
June 7, 2022

## **Regional Coalition & Washington Communities for Children (WCFC) Updates**

### **Regional Coalition Update**

#### **Inland Northwest Early Learning Alliance, Northeast**

For more information, please contact: Colleen Condon, [colleen@lilaccityelc.com](mailto:colleen@lilaccityelc.com)

- In partnership with Spokane Regional Health District, data was collected from parents about resource access and navigation in our local community. You can find the summary [here](#).
- Several members are participating in workgroups with our local school district to coordinate planning for early learning expansion in our community.
- We have continued discussions on Transitional Kindergarten and the role it plays in our local communities. Local school districts are expanding TK.

#### **Investing in Children Coalition: Central**

For more information, please contact: Lindsay Bowsell, [lindsayb@yakimavalleycf.org](mailto:lindsayb@yakimavalleycf.org) or Marina Medrano, [marinam@yakimavalleycf.org](mailto:marinam@yakimavalleycf.org)

No updates to share at this time.

#### **King County**

For more information, please contact: Laurie Bohm, [bohml@childcare.org](mailto:bohml@childcare.org)

The King County Early Learning Coalition (KCELC) has been going through a transition process. Soar, which has served as the convener and facilitator of the Coalition for many years, stepped out of this role at the end of December 2021 due to its own organizational capacity and staff transitions. In January, Child Care Resources (CCR) agreed to be the short-term organizational home of the KCELC, supporting the Coalition's interim leadership team as they work to redesign the Coalition. In April, it was determined that CCR would become the permanent organizational home of the KCELC.

CCR is now actively working to hire a full-time Coalition Coordinator for the KCELC. Please click on the link - [job description here](#). We hope to have this position filled soon.

Some other steps in the coalition redesign include re-examination of the coalition's mission, priorities, and processes. At the May coalition meeting we spent time working collectively on the coalition's purpose. In June we will have a 3-hour meeting to continue to work on the coalition's purpose, priorities, and how we can best work together going forward.

#### **North Central**

For more information please contact: Nancy Spurgeon, [nspurgeon49@gmail.com](mailto:nspurgeon49@gmail.com) or Molly Draben [molly@cisnorthcentralwa.org](mailto:molly@cisnorthcentralwa.org)

No updates to share at this time.

## Regional Coalition Update

### Northwest Region: Northwest Early Learning Coalition

For more information please contact: Linden Obel, [linden@nwelcoalition.org](mailto:linden@nwelcoalition.org)

#### Regional Highlights + Opportunities

- **Asset and resource mapping:** We have begun a county-level asset mapping process across the region, focusing in on San Juan County to direct the development of tools, process, and outreach efforts that can be adapted to other counties in our region. We hope for this process to 1) help us better understand the existing and potentially untapped assets in our region, 2) illuminate gaps and areas of opportunity, and 3) strengthen engagement among organizational partners and community members.
- **County landscape assessments:** We are excited to begin county landscape assessments specifically for Help Me Grow core component strategizing, which will help us figure out where local HMG systems and communities want to prioritize and bolster existing efforts and 2) to identify themes across the counties to show where this is alignment.
- **Regional and local fundraising:** We continue to be involved in planning for a statewide WCFC conference and fundraising event and are working to secure local and regional champions. We submitted a Group Health Community Learning Grant and look forward to hearing back soon.
- **Strengthening connections with policymakers:** Building off the momentum of WCFC Advocacy Week, we are working to strengthen coalition partnerships with our local and district policymakers. As we align priorities, we hope to be a touchpoint for policymakers when opportunities related to early childhood and family resource systems emerge.

#### County Highlights

- **Skagit** launched a Child Care Action Team facilitated by CCA NW Skagit. The group is leading local convos and work around expanding and strengthening child care, providers, services, workforce, etc.
- **Whatcom** is working to submit a proposal to the County Council on a ballot measure to support early childhood and completed a county needs assessment. [View the needs assessment report here.](#)
- **San Juan** is continuing outreach to local child health care providers and partners around Help Me Grow system design and working to raise additional funding for the new co-op preschool.
- **Island** will formally house the child care collaborative task force that facilitated the county's child care demand study and recommendations as part of the Department of Commerce grant.
- **Snohomish** focused on addressing diaper need in the county and working to re-engage with school districts around how to integrate early learning changes and not disrupt existing supports.

#### Current and Ongoing Priorities

- Building regional and county-level partnerships to explore, design, implement, and support continuous quality improvement of resource system navigation and access through a community-driven, 'no wrong door' approach.
- Developing a policy and advocacy agenda and securing flexible funding for regional coordination and capacity-building.

NWELC strives to establish a coalition infrastructure that is beneficial to all counties, optimizes unique strengths and assets, reduces inequities, and supports children, families, providers, and communities.

### Peninsula Early Learning Coalition

For more information, please contact: Marlaina Simmons, [marlaina.simmons@kitsapstrong.org](mailto:marlaina.simmons@kitsapstrong.org) and Elisia Anderson, [elisiaf\\_fstep@olypen.com](mailto:elisiaf_fstep@olypen.com)

No updates to share at this time.

## Regional Coalition Update

### **Pierce County Early Childhood Network (formerly Project Child Success), Pierce County**

**For more information please contact: Muriel Herrera-Velasquez, [muriel@first5fundamentals.org](mailto:muriel@first5fundamentals.org)**

**PCECN:** The restructure conversations in Pierce County have come to fruition as the Pierce County Early Childhood Network along with the hiring of several new permanent staff. This new structure and capacity will allow Pierce County to focus on areas of community identified need. New positions include: Child Care Voice Program Manager, Program Coordinator, Administrative Coordinator, Communications and Development Manager, and Equity Manager. Muriel Herrera-Velasquez joins the PCECN as the new Program Coordinator, with a focus on the Policy and Advocacy Team as well as the Family Voice team.

**Child Care Voice Team** (formerly Child Care Strategies Action Team): The Child Care Voice Team has received funding from Pierce County to hire two staff to manage a child care capacity and expansion project. The manager has been hired and we are in the process of hiring the second staff for this team.

**Policy and Advocacy Team:** The Policy and Advocacy Team representative has switched to Muriel at this time. Tess Foy has since moved to a new position and will no longer represent PCECN at ELAC. Advocacy Day took place in January of this year and succeeded in reaching and educating the community on the fundamentals of advocating for early childhood priorities.

### **Southeast**

**For more information, please contact: Matt Bona, [mbona@esd123.org](mailto:mbona@esd123.org)**

#### **Benton-Franklin Early Learning Alliance -**

This month BEFLA continued our discussion around what the coalition is going to look like post-COVID. BEFLA discussed the need to come together and have a facilitated discussion around defining the shared purpose and outcomes of the meetings. Discussions have been had about using a formal facilitator and a compression planning process. There is also the possibility of utilizing local graduate students and the health district to help us with some data collection that will inform our work.

BEFLA continued their work in family engagement and held a collaboration meeting around parent outreach -- specifically around how to message to the larger community around the importance of caregiver interactions.

BEFLA continued to engage in community advocacy efforts most recently around the portable background check process for licensed childcare providers.

Convened the BEFLA monthly meeting and had rich resource sharing and breakout sessions amongst members.

#### **Walla Walla Early Learning Coalition -**

Our Columbia County Child Care stakeholder group did receive funding from the Department of Commerce ELF fund. WWELC also applied for funding from a local trust. A community forum about childcare is planned for May 23rd.

WWELC has refined and improved their local childcare system flyers and those will be ready to print soon.

WWELC have also begun conversations about developing a webpage to find local childcare.

WWELC also started a private/public early learning collaborative with public preschool programs and private

## Regional Coalition Update

childcare providers to work towards common goals.

### **Asotin/Clarkston Early Learning Coalition –**

ACELC have concluded their Head Start to Kindergarten transitions meetings with Lewis Clark Early Childhood Programs with our 4 elementary schools.

### **Southwest Washington Early Learning (SWEL)**

**For more information please contact: Debbie Ham, [Debbie.ham@selfwa.org](mailto:Debbie.ham@selfwa.org)**

Our SW Washington Child Care Partnership formed to assist the expansion of licensed family child care homes in Central Vancouver child care deserts, with specific outreach to Latinx communities has reached an important milestone. Currently we have supported two LatinX women in opening their licensed family child care business. They are financially supporting their families, supporting working parents so that other local businesses can rely on a stable workforce. We expect a third to be licensed very soon. This partnership highlights:

- The need to support prospective business owners prior to becoming licensed.
- The need to address disparities in the licensing system and access to resources.
- The value of community-based partnerships and our ability to be nimble in solving problems, sharing services, and accessing resources. As opposed to notion that all services need to be managed and controlled at the state level.

We have the ability at the local and regional level to be accountable and effective in approving systems and resources.

### **Visions for Early Learning, West Central**

**For more information, please contact: Emily Wilson-Edge, [Emily.wilson-edge@centralia.edu](mailto:Emily.wilson-edge@centralia.edu)**

Coalitions continue to grow in membership and focus. Moving into summer, counties are appreciative of the opportunities to engage with families and organizations that have been missing over the last two years. Two family events are occurring in June and one in August, all with many local family agencies providing tables with family activities. They both are also offering free lunch to all attending children and families, as well as other resources and take aways. Providers and community organizations have expressed gratitude for the ability to gather again in service to families.

In addition to family resource fairs in Mason, Lewis, and Thurston Counties, other programs and services are starting again. North Pacific is sponsoring a Conscious Discipline training for providers in the area, and Grays Harbor is again supporting parenting classes in the area. These are both long standing initiatives that were interrupted during the pandemic, and are returning to serve our communities. Workgroups are beginning in county coalitions focused on outreach and service to families and providers, advocacy elevating family voice, coordinated access and resource navigation, among others.

Coalition meetings have increased in number and breadth of membership. There are often member agencies highlighted each month, recently including The ARC of the Peninsulas, County Health Departments, Child Care Aware, ABCD Dental, Early Learning Navigators, and Timberland Regional Library. Coalitions have made a concerted effort to reach out to child care providers and work in collaboration with other agencies serving. We have strong partnerships with regional Early Achievers Coaches who helped reestablish relationships, and have connected with both long term and new early learning providers in our area. Additionally, all counties have Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems workgroups that meet regularly with the long term goal of individualized coordinated referral networks.

### **WCFC State Updates**

**For more information please contact: Rachel Hall, WCFC State Lead, [rachelh@first5fundamentals.org](mailto:rachelh@first5fundamentals.org)**

### **WCFC Newsletter & Social Media**

In January, we launched a newsletter; a new platform to provide you with current news and information. We also just launched our social media platforms. You can connect with us in the following ways:

- **Facebook:** WashingtonCFC
- **Instagram and Twitter:** @washington\_cfc
- **Email:** [info@washingtoncfc.org](mailto:info@washingtoncfc.org)
- **Website:** [washingtoncfc.org](http://washingtoncfc.org)
- **To submit content for consideration for future newsletters:** email [news@washingtoncfc.org](mailto:news@washingtoncfc.org)

### **Beyond Connection: Inaugural WCFC Early Childhood Conference**

We are in the process of planning WCFC's first ever early childhood conference that will take place at the end of September. The purpose of this event is to **learn** about the impact of the WCFC network, **engage** with others across the state who care about children, **amplify** community voice, **celebrate** innovative ideas, and **support** a campaign to sustain the WCFC infrastructure. More details including dates and registration coming soon!

### **WCFC Learning Networks – Join us!**

There are six statewide Washington Communities for Children Learning Networks. The purpose of these teams is to foster learning and connections across the state, with particular focus in each of the component areas below. Participation is open to anyone, including state and local partners who are interested in shared learning and activities. For meeting schedules, and to get in touch with Learning Network leads, please visit our website at [washingtoncfc.org/learning-networks](http://washingtoncfc.org/learning-networks).

- Data
- Equity
- Family Voice
- Health Provider Voice
- Policy & Advocacy
- Resource Navigation & Access

### **Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems (ECCS) Grant**

WCFC received a portion of the ECCS grant through the Department of Health. The ECCS Grant fits within the Resource Navigation & Access Learning network. In this space, partners learn about existing resource and referral directories and identify ways to better connect families to services. This has included exploring Open Referral's approach to developing interoperability among resource information systems and open access infrastructure for directory data management. [More information about the approach is available here.](#) Between January and July 2022, WCFC is convening a cohort of 4 Regions with rural communities (Peninsulas Region, North Central Region, Visions for Early Learning Region, and San Juan County). These communities will work with Open Referral to explore and assess options for creating and maintaining localized resource directory information. The focus will be on children and family services for children aged 0-3.